new species begin establishing themselves. Besides, they are generally bound to specific food-plants and would therefore take longer than birds to establish themselves in a new area. Of course, this only applies to butterflies that do not migrate or wander about a great deal.

It is my sincere hope that these ' new developments ' within the bird community are not an indication of other, more profound changes to come in the ecology of the area. Even a slight change in climate would be disastrous to the fruit orchards, as the temperate fruit trees growing at lower elevations such as apples, plums and apricots would suffer. What makes the new development so important is the number of species involved, all occupying more or less separate ecological niches.

A much more detailed and thorough study of the above phenomenon is necessary before any firm conclusions can be drawn and then it would be wise to carry out such an investigation within the framework of the general ecology of the area. As neither my family members nor I am in a position to undertake further studies of this phenomenon yet, it was my aim to draw the attention of others to what is perhaps a new problem.

' The Retreat ',
Bhimtal P.O. 263136,
Dist. Nainital, U.P.,
April 30, 1973.

VICTOR SMETACEK

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3. TAWNY EAGLE AS A SCAVENGER

Eagles are rare birds. They are not common in and around busy cities. Yet a place about three miles south-west of Poona offers a spectacle probably uncommon in any part of the country. On view here is a 200-strong contigent of Tawny Eagles (*Aquila rapax*).

The Tawny Eagle is known to be a scavenger and an opportunist. Its opportunistic behaviour is best seen at this place where waste material from a chicken-dressing plant provides it with regular and easily obtainable food. Abundant food supply has attracted a large number of eagles who feed in the early morning and then spend the day perched on nearby trees and hill-sides. They are well-accustomed to human presence. I have approached them quite close for photography. Their number has apparently deterred vultures.

By their habits birds of prey are solitary creatures. But in this case plentiful food supply has probably reversed this natural tendency. The

eagles have become quite sociable and are often seen sitting quite close to each other. It will also be interesting to see if this easy life has diminished their breeding urge. For even during the breeding season, i.e. November to April, no nest was found in the vicinity of this site. Eagles were never seen carrying nesting material or to build nests. In fact a majority of them used to roost at night on nearby hill slopes and apparently never left the site at all. The problem however, needs fuller investigation.

184 Shaniwar Peth, PRAKASH V. GOLE
Poona-30,
May 18, 1973.

4. STOMACH CONTENTS OF THE GREAT INDIAN BUSTARD, *CHORIOTIS NIGRICEPS* (VIGORS)

The Great Indian Bustard, *Choriotis nigriceps* (Vigors) is one of the most magnificent of Indian birds. Its dwindling population has been a matter of great concern to conservationists for a number of years.

Through the kindness of Shri H. C. Gupta, Divisional Forest Officer, Jodhpur and Shri Y. D. Singh, Zoo Supervisor, Jodhpur, I had an opportunity of examining the stomach contents of a bird caught in August, 1970, near Pokaran (Jaisalmer District, Rajasthan). The stomach was full being filled with *Uromastix hardwickii*, scorpion fragments, sun-spider (*Galeodes orientalis*), beetles (*Gymnopleurus ? sindensis* and *Atactogaster* sp.), fruits of *Capparis* sp., and a few seeds of undetermined species. The weight of each item is given in Table 1 below. Before taking the weight the stomach contents had been preserved in rectified spirit and then dried by soaking the moisture on a blotting paper. As such the data is only suggestive of the quantity of food a bird may require for one feed.

Table 1

Food items and their weight

Uromastix hardwickii (1 ex.)	18·81 gm	17·60%
Scorpion parts	0·70 gm	0·65%
Spider (1 ex.)	3·00 gm	2·80%
Beetles (entire and crushed)	82·27 gm	77·03%
Fruits of *Capparis* sp. (7 exs.)	2·02 gm	1·89%
Seeds negligible in weight		
Total	106·80 gm	99·97%